



**SEMI-ANNUAL REPORT**  
**(October 2002-March 2003)**  
**THE PEACEFUL COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE**  
**Conflict Mitigation Initiative in the Ferghana Valley**  
**Cooperative Agreement #122-A-00-01-00035-00**



## **Table of Contents**

<b>Executive Summary .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Government Relationships .....</b>	<b>4</b>
Building Bridges Between Nations .....	4
Improving Relationships Between PCI Communities and Local Government .....	4
Cost Share .....	5
<b>Infrastructure Projects .....</b>	<b>6</b>
Increase in the Number of Infrastructure Projects .....	6
How does a health clinic or a bathhouse address conflict in a community?.....	6
An Obvious Example of Reducing Tensions: Korayantak Health Clinic.....	7
A Less Obvious Example of Reducing Tensions: Bakhmal School Repair Project.....	7
Construction Periods are Longer than Anticipated .....	7
<b>Social Projects .....</b>	<b>8</b>
International Children's Festival for Friendship .....	9
Sohk-Batken Volleyball League .....	9
International Chess Tournament .....	10
<b>Evolving Process and New Directions .....</b>	<b>11</b>
CIG Experience Exchange .....	11
Modification to the Staffing Structure .....	12
CIG Capacity Building Coordinator .....	13
Public Relations Officer.....	14
Volunteers .....	14
The non-engineer .....	14
<b>Coordination.....</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Other Initiatives and Events .....</b>	<b>16</b>
Isfara Meeting .....	16
<b>Political Issues .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Contact Information .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Appendix A: PCI Community Profiles .....</b>	<b>18</b>

## **Executive Summary**

The Peaceful Communities Initiative (PCI) is a three-year USAID-supported \$2.1 million project operating since October 2001, in Kyrgystan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, the three states that share the Ferghana Valley. PCI aims to reduce inter-ethnic and trans-border conflict through a combination of social and infrastructure projects driven by local Community Initiative Groups (CIGs). Through such projects, PCI strives to improve the quality of life in communities across national, ethnic, gender and age boundaries, and to increase the ability of communities to identify sources of conflict and participate in a constructive dialogue to generate and implement sustainable solutions.

Implementation of the Initiative is through a partnership of local and international NGOs: ICA-EHIO from Tajikistan, Mehr, Fido and the Business Women's Association of Kokand in Uzbekistan, the Foundation for Tolerance International in Kyrgystan, and Mercy Corps in all three countries. Members of these partners work together in five mixed field teams. The Five Field Teams in PCI work in five regions between the cities of Khojund and Osh, and take a grassroots community development approach to conflict prevention. The intentional mixture of ethnicities and nationalities within each field team is critical for maintaining an unbiased approach to understanding and addressing community problems in this complicated region.

The Fundamental Approach of the project is to involve a large number of stakeholders from rural communities in the decision-making process that will lead to social and infrastructure projects designed to reduce tension over scarce resources and increase peaceful contact and communication.

This semi-annual report covers the period from October 2002 through March 2003. This report describes PCI relations with local governments, including areas of building relations between the three countries governments, improving relationships between PCI communities and local government, and cost share. This report also includes an overview of how infrastructure and social projects work towards the overall goal of reducing the potential for conflict, PCI's evolving process and new directions that are being undertaken (including the modification of the staffing structure), and coordination efforts.

One appendix has been added, the PCI Community Profiles.

### **Government Relationships**

Heading into the second year of the project, PCI has developed significant relationships with local governments. Partnership has been forged at a variety of levels of government, from the community level to the raion (administrative region) level to the oblast (state) level. In the communities, local governments have provided varying degrees of support with the implementation of both social and infrastructure projects. With that said, relationships with local governments have not always been easy to create or maintain, as officials have often made promises that were not met (most frequently promises of material inputs to infrastructure projects). These relationships have made an impact in several different areas, including building bridges between nations, improved relationships between communities and local government, and assisting communities with cost share.

#### *Building Bridges Between Nations*

Many of the PCI infrastructure projects and almost all of the social projects are transborder in nature. With the infrastructure projects there is often the need to have formal agreement between governments, for example on the transborder drinking water and irrigation projects. On these projects, PCI brings officials from both sides of the border to agree on sharing resources. This is a rare opportunity for officials to come together in a positive atmosphere where they are taking steps to address problems in their respective raions. We have found that though there is often a desire on all sides to address these type of resource-based issues, there is often no forum or opportunity for officials to dialogue.

On the social projects, there are dozens of examples of bringing officials together from across borders. All social projects are focused on bringing together citizens from PCI communities to strengthen friendships and lines of communication. At the larger social meetings, government representatives from different sides of the border have an opportunity to develop relationships and discuss their problems.

For example, during one recent Navruz (Muslim New Year) celebration on the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border in Ovchi, Tajikistan, senior government officials from both neighboring raions attended. As a recently appointed hakim (head of the raion) from Kyrgyzstan and deputy hakim from Tajikistan sat and enjoyed the event together, they talked and laughed amongst themselves almost the entire time. Though they appeared to be old acquaintances, this was their first time to meet, and both expressed gratitude to the communities for providing them an opportunity to get to know each other. This casual relationship-building is certainly a positive development between these neighboring regions.

#### *Improving Relationships Between PCI Communities and Local Government*

Improving the relationship between PCI communities and local government has been one of the greatest successes to date of the PCI project. A majority of the PCI communities are mono-ethnic communities living as ethnic minorities in another country, which has led to a feeling of discrimination and isolation. Citizens have found that once they begin

to address their problems through the PCI process, that the problems are often more difficult to solve than they anticipated and that many problems did not necessarily result from government neglect or discrimination but from a lack of resources. On a majority of projects, the local government has embraced the opportunity to play a key role in the development of the project and demonstrate to the communities that local government really does care. The below example from Pahtaabad, Tajikistan further demonstrates a positive result of this strengthened relationship.

In Pahtaabad, Tajikistan, residents selected a transportation project, with the intention of purchasing a bus to service the nearest town, eight kilometers away. Though a variety of project ideas were presented and an ongoing dialogue with the local jamoat (village leadership council) was established, in the end, the community decided to collect money door-to-door and purchase a used natural gas powered bus. PCI agreed in principle to repair the bus into good condition, and assist with the creation of a sustainable business plan for the bus service.

It should be noted that the local government was very active in trying to find a solution, and at one point offered to give the community a used bus from the local kolhoz (collective farm). Though the community turned down this offer for fear that the kolhoz might eventually take the bus back, the offer was appreciated.

Once the Community Initiative Group came up with a well-designed plan to collect money, news broke that the jamoat had convinced a marshrutka (minibus) driver from Ovchi (the nearby town) to invest money in a license and begin servicing Pahtaabad. Although the Community Initiative Group was initially disheartened that they would not have a chance to purchase their own bus, they quickly realized that the establishment of marshrutka service was in fact, the successful result of their own initiative. Furthermore, it was not lost on the residents of Pahtaabad that the dialogue with the jamoat produced an ideal solution for their top priority problem.

Six weeks after the service began; the #71 shuttle service from Pahtaabad to Ovchi is both adequately addressing the need for transport and proving to be financially viable for the driver.

### *Cost Share*

To promote sustainability, all PCI social and infrastructure projects require a community cost share of at least 25%. This cost share has frequently included the local government's contribution of technical labor, use of technical equipment, and materials. For example, in the development of the health clinic in Korayantak, Uzbekistan the local government gave the community land for the building, designed the blue prints for construction, provided on-site technical assistance during construction, donated medical equipment once the building was complete and committed one doctor and ten nurses to the long-term staffing of the clinic. Although it is not easy to determine the dollar amount of their contribution, it is safe to say that their support was invaluable in making the project a success, on more than one level.

### **Infrastructure Projects**

During the reporting period there was a significant increase in the number and diversity of projects. Project types include bathhouses, drinking water systems, irrigation repair, natural gas pipelines, road, school and sport facility repairs. As PCI undertakes the repair or construction of basic infrastructure, we do not simply want to restore facilities that were last repaired in the Soviet period, taking on the responsibilities of communities and local government. PCI's goal is to transfer the responsibility to the community residents themselves, by seeking the maximum amount of resident involvement and underscoring the need for integrated sustainability components into all relevant projects. However, this approach of committing to large community mobilization and a cost share of at least 25% has in some cases led to the lengthening of time in the project's implementation.

#### *Increase in the Number of Infrastructure Projects*

The infrastructure projects are a tool to strengthen intra- and inter-community relationships and promote community development. In the first year of the project, PCI focused on better understanding the communities in which we work, and defining the communities' main sources of tensions and major problems. PCI wanted to make sure that the infrastructure projects chosen to work on were important for a majority of the citizens, which in turn would promote the sustainability of the project. The increase in the number of infrastructure projects in this period results from the end of a long process of identification.

#### *How does a health clinic or a bathhouse address conflict in a community?*

PCI team members are frequently asked how certain projects are part of a wider conflict prevention objective. We choose communities based on their potential for conflict using the primary criteria of proximity to borders, natural resource scarcity, multi-ethnic population, the presence of a mono-ethnic population living inside another state (i.e., an ethnic Kyrgyz community located in Uzbekistan), and/or a history of conflict. After a community is selected, PCI has a long-term commitment to working in that community. The roots of conflict are complicated, and PCI is taking a broad approach to community development. Thus, how the selection of individual projects fits into that broader commitment might not always be obvious. While an irrigation system repair that will benefit downstream users is fairly obvious in how it addresses conflict, the repair of a school or the building of a bathhouse requires closer examination. The two following examples highlight both ends of the spectrum.





### *An Obvious Example of Reducing Tensions: Korayantak Health Clinic*

Korayantak is a 100% ethnic Krygyz village within the Republic of Uzbekistan. Korayantak is located on the border with Kyrgyzstan, but due to the Government of Uzbekistan's widespread destruction of roads to limit access and allow for tighter border control, residents of Korayantak must cross into Kyrgyzstan, and through an Uzbekistan border post to cross into the Raion center of Vodil, Uzbekistan. It is as convoluted as it sounds, and in essence, Korayantak is in a "no mans land."

Because of difficulties crossing borders, several residents from Korayantak and other neighboring villages who were seeking medical attention, died last year when they were unable to cross the border because they did not have the proper documents. Further compounding the situation is the lack of public transportation, which makes it difficult for citizens to travel to the health clinic in Vodil. Citizens were enraged because they felt that the Uzbekistan Government neglected them because they are ethnic Kyrgyz. PCI's subsequent construction of a health clinic, with strong support from local authorities, will provide healthcare to 3000 people, including two neighboring communities, and remove the need to cross through the border post for medical attention.

### *A Less Obvious Example of Reducing Tensions: Bakhmal School Repair Project*

Bakhmal, Uzbekistan is a community divided into two neighborhoods, distinctly divided on ethnic lines. For the large minority population of Tajiks in Bakhmal (40%), their declining living standards and lack of attention from local authorities are often thought to be related to their ethnicity, despite the fact that the nearby population of Uzbeks face many of the same conditions. When also factoring in the fact that Tajik residents are separated from their friends and relatives in Tajikistan by a closed border and mined foothills, it is understandable why tensions run high.

Despite the pronounced ethnic split between neighborhoods, residents from both sections share many of the same resources including the one school in Bakhmal (in the old section), and a kindergarten (in the newer part of Bakhmal). Both need repair and attention. When both Uzbek and Tajik residents agreed to repair the school as their first project, this provided an opportunity from both ethnic populations to work together for a common goal. Money was collected by parents of all students, and residents from the whole of Bakhmal undertook to repair floors, patch ceilings, and paint the interior of the school. What was unique about this project was that money was collected and work began before one penny was spent on PCI's side. PCI's contribution was the purchasing of new desks for students and teachers, and textbooks to be used by all. This project has been a good vehicle for dialogue between ethnic groups, and both Uzbek and Tajik members of the CIG are now planning future projects together.

### *Construction Periods are Longer than Anticipated*

Though not always the case, many of the construction periods are longer than anticipated. The reasons for this include:

- Community mobilization is a part of Central Asian culture, but PCI is asking citizens to work on projects they selected. Community participation is

- traditionally directed by community heads for projects such as clean roads, harvest, and other community projects.
- Cost share is a new concept for many communities. Some of the communities who agreed to a 25% cost share never believed that they would be held to it.
  - In many of the communities that are located at high elevations, the winter weather delayed construction activities.
  - Getting construction materials across borders without paying duty has often proved time consuming. For example, pipeline to be used in Kyrgyzstan that was purchased in Uzbekistan.

Again, the process of community participation in the project is vital. The example below from Jeke Miste highlights the pros and cons of shifting responsibility to residents themselves.

The implementation period for the construction of a transborder drinking water system in Jekke Meste has taken longer than planned. PCI has experienced problems both with community mobilization and the fulfillment of promised cost share from the local government. If PCI had simply tendered a construction company the project might have taken only four months, but would have focused little on the participation of residents. The arduous route that we have committed to has lengthened the process significantly, but has resulted in the community taking the primary role in moving the project forward. There is little doubt that this route will lead to the community feeling much more ownership of the project than if it had been tendered. When Iskander, the CIG leader, was asked why there were so many problems in the community mobilization process, he responded that “the citizens really did not believe that they would have to work on the project. The next project will be easier.”

### **Social Projects**

Social projects continue to be a key focus of the PCI process with dozens of events held between October and March that involved bringing citizens together from all of PCI’s 28 communities. During the past 6 months there has been an increase in the number and size of events, and an influx of creative ideas for social projects from the Community Initiative Groups. The social projects focus on:

- Youth
- Gender balance
- Creating multi-ethnic environments
- International events
- Parent involvement
- Promoting healthy lifestyles and intellectual development
- Non-competitive environment
- Non-threatening environment



Examples of recent events include a girls' volleyball league, chess tournament, talent shows, handicraft fairs, and music festivals, as well as building on projects from the first year, including the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual USAID Ferghana Valley Basketball League, Navruz festivals, and Inter-Community Youth Newsletters. There has been a move to make long lasting events, thus supporting leagues as opposed to individual sport events, longer preparation for theater events, and a series of newspapers. It is hoped these social events will promote healthy lifestyles, interests, and a place for people to build friendships.

The following three social events are different examples of the types of projects that PCI communities put together to build and strengthen relationships, and have a little fun while doing so.

#### *International Children's Festival for Friendship*

The Children's Festival held in Kyrgyz Kyshtak is a good example of an event that brought communities together. The five participating PCI communities were Kyrgyz Kyshtak, Katput, Borbolik, Korayantak, and Kaytpas, representing the three major ethnic groups of the Ferghana Valley. Over the past several years these communities have been divided by the killing of herders by border guards, the stealing of wheat to feed livestock, as well as the stealing of livestock.

The event was attended by heads of all five communities and over 300 students. Children prepared for months and the celebration included songs in all three languages, short skits, traditional dances, and ended with a disco. Every group of children from each community was given twenty minutes to perform for their neighbors. One of the events even included a skit on crossing the border into Uzbekistan and the need to pay a bribe. Ironically, the mock bribe of 100 Uzbek soum (a ridiculously low figure) brought laughter from much of the crowd!



On a lighter note, the mayor of Kyrgyz Kyshtak sat in the front row in a seat that was the target of a leaking roof. He said that the roof would be repaired for the next event.

#### *Sohk-Batken Volleyball League*

Six girls' teams from six PCI communities in the Sohk enclave, Uzbekistan, and Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan, played a 12-game schedule, each in 6 tournaments, in a 4 month

period. Aside from the competition, each game is accompanied by lunch for the players, which gives the girls an opportunity to make new friendships and learn more about each other. Building relationships is key in Sokh, where trans-border land disputes and limited natural resources have been sources of tension, and in some cases, conflict. Before PCI helped organize a girl's basketball league in the Sokh enclave, there were no opportunities for girls to compete in sports outside of the schoolyard, and even that had its limitations until a group of young Sharkabad residents wrote and implemented a \$200 volleyball court and soccer field repair project.

Though the Sokh enclave is territory of Uzbekistan, the population is nearly one-hundred percent Tajik, and the enclave is located completely within the territory of Kyrgyzstan. Tucked inside a spectacular mountain landscape, this area, once belonging to the Tajik Khan of Kanibadam, has long since been overlooked by the Government of Uzbekistan, which struggles to meet the needs of its citizens in the Ferghana Valley. This neglect made Sokh sympathetic when the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan launched multiple incursions into Uzbekistan from the surrounding mountains in the late 1990s.

When one athlete, Madina, was asked her general impression about the tournament, she responded, "We need more chances to play together. Before we played volleyball (with Sogment in Batken Oblast), I had no chance to ever meet anyone from there. Now I have girlfriends there, and I hope to learn more about their community, and the life of young people there." When the league started the girls all wore traditional dress and slippers, and now they are sporting track suits and basketball shoes donated by Nike.

#### *International Chess Tournament*

The Peaceful Communities Initiative held an international chess tournament with five PCI communities in Makhabat, Uzbekistan. This was the first chess tournament that the players participated in, and brought players from communities on the border of Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan. This tournament builds on the relationship between these PCI communities has developed over the last year, including youth camps, sport leagues, festivals, and transborder infrastructure projects.

The tournament had players from Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and the United States. Twenty-four players played in the single elimination event. The event was played in a friendly atmosphere, and those that lost continued to play throughout the day. Many of the players said that the event was the first such event they have participated in, and felt it was a great opportunity to build relationships between the



neighboring communities. All chess players will meet again during a Navruz Festival to be held with all communities in March.

### **Evolving Process and New Directions**

As indicated in this report, PCI has gone through a natural progression of now having a greater focus on the community mobilization process. The first year was setting up shop, selecting staff and communities and implementing the first social and infrastructure projects. In Year 2, PCI will naturally take a step closer to our communities and focus on the development of the CIGs and the mobilization process. All of this with the underpinning objective to reduce the potential for conflict in the Ferghana Valley. This section highlights the some changes in organizational structure that were made to assist the field officers in the community mobilization process.

#### *CIG Experience Exchange*

One significant event that will guide PCI in the coming year was a meeting of CIG members from across the Ferghana Valley for two days of experience sharing and discussion in March. Twenty-one CIG members representing nineteen PCI communities brought their stories and ideas together at a sanatorium near Besharyk, Uzbekistan. During these two days, in conversations that simultaneously featured Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Tajik and Russian languages, it became apparent through the participants' experiences and recommendations that a fundamental shift in our process has taken place. After months of PCI field teams encouraging communities to bridge differences and solve problems, it is clear that to varying degrees, CIGs are beginning to drive the process themselves.

The meeting was designed around the basic goals of sharing ideas and lessons learned from community mobilization so far, and discussing ways to improve the process. Additionally, we hoped that this meeting would further energize and motivate participants, who would then bring this energy back into their CIGs. One highlight of the meeting was that the CIG members began to understand and feel that they are part of a larger Ferghana Valley initiative, not just the activities in their respective communities. The meeting was far more fruitful in all of those areas than we could have anticipated.

When CIG members discussed accomplishments to date, they shared success stories focusing on a better understanding of common issues faced by neighbors, experience solving problems jointly within communities and between communities, and improved relations between residents and local authorities. Difficulties in the community mobilization process included mistrust of local government, misunderstanding of neighbors' situations, and a general lack of awareness of PCI, among others. Women also added that their participation was limited in the mobilization process due to the amount of time and responsibilities related to their families. When participants were asked to brainstorm what skills or knowledge they had acquired, they mentioned the importance of revealing problems in order to find solutions to them, how to gain the confidence of others by using transparency, how to work effectively with local government, and how to view and utilize people as resources.

The key session focused on what PCI can do to improve the community mobilization process. The most important aspect was the confidence with which the CIG representatives spoke. The following areas identified and suggested solutions offer insight into the direction of mobilization in PCI communities:

- To improve public awareness of successes and ongoing projects within the communities, via town meetings, local media coverage, regular informing of local authorities, creation and updating of information boards in each community.
- To provide moral support for active community residents and government officials in the form of public recognition and acknowledgement. It was suggested that gestures as simple as certificates of appreciation would be welcomed.
- To further strengthen the capacity of CIGs through the balancing of participation among members, and the clarification, and in some cases division, of roles and responsibilities.
- To increase training opportunities and workshops for CIG members on topics ranging from project design to computer literacy. In some instances, attendees could in turn share experiences and ideas with other community members.
- To seek further cooperation with local governments, local businesses and other potential partners.
- To organize forums for dialogue between current PCI communities, which could be used to mediate problems or resolve conflicts in the future.
- To improve communication between the five regions where PCI is being implemented, and provide opportunities for residents from these areas to communicate. Ideas for multiple-region social projects, such as national holiday celebrations or sporting events, were discussed favorably by participants.

By providing CIG representatives with a chance to collectively determine new directions that will be undertaken by PCI, we are more confident that our bottom up approach is still on track. These recommendations will become top priorities for both project management and PCI field teams.

The reality is that many of our CIGs are still being driven by a handful of very active individuals, even though most CIG boast between 15 to 20 members. Our team recognizes that it is natural that certain individuals would embrace the principles of mobilization faster than others, but increasing the contributions and commitments of all CIG members is a major goal in the further development of the CIGs. To respond to the development of the CIGs and increase community participation we will add a CIG Capacity Building Coordinator.

#### *Modification to the Staffing Structure*

The personnel structure of PCI is centered on the field officer. The five PCI teams vary from three to five field officers, who by design, work with their teammates to provide comprehensive and constant support to the Community Initiative Groups. To provide

support to field officers and reflect the incorporation of valuable experience, we have added a CIG Capacity Building Coordinator, Public Relations Officer, and volunteers.

#### *CIG Capacity Building Coordinator*

One of the major developments in the last few months has been the strengthening of the community mobilization process. In the vast majority of our communities, CIGs themselves are now driving this process (albeit usually led by a handful of active individuals) with field officers beginning to play more of a support role. Though individual projects have been initiated by CIGs from early on, the constant presence of our teams in the communities and an appropriate level of encouragement has been necessary to move the process of community mobilization. With the widespread maturation of the CIGs (which is more fully detailed in the above mentioned description of the CIG experience exchange), it is clear that our role needs to shift from leading the community mobilization process to assisting with the development and institutionalization of these emerging community entities.

The primary focus of future efforts with CIGs will be to encourage a more balanced level of participation within groups and to transfer even more responsibilities related to community mobilization and individual project management to the CIG members themselves. In addition to what our teams can offer during daily interactions, opportunities such as trainings, exchanges, and other capacity building activities for CIGs are available, but often underutilized or only done by individual teams or in particular geographic areas. This trend is inherently related to the autonomous nature of how the five teams operate, and the infrequent contact between them. In order to better coordinate the five teams in regards to the development of CIGs in each region, and increase the amount of attention the overall team puts to this matter, we have added a CIG Capacity Building Coordinator to focus on this process exclusively.

This individual will work with each of the five teams to develop a CIG capacity building plan tailored to the needs of their grouped communities. After this resource has been developed, the CIG Capacity Building Coordinator will then select one CIG within each team's grouping, and facilitate a multiple-staged iteration designed to strengthen or stimulate various elements of CIG development. By modeling the development of one CIG for each of the five teams, these teams will then be able to replicate this process for other CIGs in their region, including Women's Initiative Groups and Youth Initiative Groups. This modeling approach allows the PCI field officers to continue to be the primary source of contact for the vast majority of CIGs during this process.

The CIG Capacity Building Coordinator position will be filled by one of our most talented field officers, Munira Saifulloeva. By filling the position from within our own ranks, we are able to provide teams with a resource already familiar with the nuances of CIG development to date, and a known quantity, respected and understanding of PCI dynamics and goals. Munira, also the Director of our partner agency ICA:EHIO, should be very valuable in the longer term development of their NGO.

### *Public Relations Officer*

One of the most important aims of PCI is to set a good precedent for trans-border dialogue and friendship, and to demonstrate the mutual benefit of cooperation between communities and government. Though PCI has already achieved much, and plans to further build on these results, we have not maximized the promotion of these successes. Based on the request of CIG members themselves, in order to increase the amount of awareness in border regions to the good work that residents are accomplishing in the villages, PCI has added a PR Officer to the support team.

During the first year of PCI, though there were some very creative and effective examples of promotion, the utilization of media and other promotional resources was inconsistent. Though some teams used local journalists and news outlets such as radio and television to promote the successes of communities where PCI is implementing, in general, field officers almost exclusively depended on journalists responding to invitations to cover individual events. After carefully looking at ways to better inform the public about PCI, we have decided to add a resource to our team in order to better bring the news to the journalists themselves. By adding a PR Officer to the support team, PCI hopes to be more proactive in building relationships with journalists in Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan, and increase the amount and regularity of information sent to media and information outlets. This includes laying the groundwork for better press with the distribution of media kits, regular contact with media outlets, and an increased frequency of press releases.

Furthermore, the PR Officer will not be limited to working with journalists, but will also focus on informing local and regional authorities of project successes. The PR Officer will also assist teams with this process.

### *Volunteers*

As relationships between mobilization teams and CIGs mature, one phenomenon that we have encountered is the incorporation of volunteers into the mobilization process. Though all of the individuals with whom we work via CIGs are unpaid, there is an important distinction to make between what we now refer to as volunteers and CIG members. A volunteer is someone who is more interested with one aspect of our social projects, i.e. sports coordinating, and less interested in the overall community development process, including infrastructure projects. These volunteers are able to be integrally involved with certain projects, and completely uninvolved with others. CIG members are encouraged by field teams and relied upon by residents to be at least partially involved in all of our project activities within each community. Though CIG membership is fluid and voluntary as well, their participation brings a higher expectation.

### *The non-engineer*

One significant moment related to staffing during the first quarter of this year was the PCI Team's collective decision to not hire a floating engineer to assist teams with the design and implementation of technical projects. Although there had been talk about the addition of such an individual for some time during the first year of the project, during a meeting in January when teams presented the lessons learned from the implementation of

technical projects, it became clear that there is now a wealth of experience in this area within the teams themselves. For example, if a community selects a water project, the PCI field team responsible for assisting the CIG with that project can now directly contact those teams that have experience implementing various water projects, such as Team Two's project in Vorukh, Team Three's project in Sogment-Hushyar-Charbak and Sogment, and Team Four's work with the Jeke Miste-Naiman project. After a year of experience, valuable lessons learned related to aspects of mobilization, technical details, procurement issues and sustainability plans for a range of project types have been accumulated by individual teams. Therefore, it was a significant decision when all team members decided that improved communication between the five field teams would better incorporate lessons learned into the design and implementation of future projects than the addition of one engineering generalist.

### **Coordination**

Over the period this report covers, PCI coordinated with numerous other international organization. Coordination in the period included:

- ABA Custom Training for PCI Field Officers
- Counterpart NGO development training of Korayantak CIG
- World Bank commitment to medical equipment to the Korayantak Health Clinic in the summer of 2003
- A Nike container of 10,000 items of sport youth clothing. The equipment is being used for supporting sport projects in PCI Communities
- Central Asian Free Exchange provided trainings for pregnant women who had low iron levels, provided iron tablets, and eyeglasses for near-sighted citizens in 2 PCI communities.
- Counterpart Consortium provided a grant to extend the Pahtabuston Natural Gas Pipeline to a neighboring community.
- John Strickland became a member of the Eurasia Special Advisory Board for the Ferghana Valley and was on the selection committee for an IREX Community Connection study tour to USAID focused on conflict prevention for media, government, police, and NGO representatives from Jala Abad, Kyrgyzstan.
- Land O'Lakes is providing milk for school children in 3 PCI Communities.
- Abt's ZdravPlus program held a soccer game day for teams from 4 PCI Communities.
- IFRC conducted a mine awareness training for PCI field officers who work in communities where the Uzbekistan Government placed mines to prevent the movements of the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan.
- Two USAID Farmer-to-Farmer volunteers will be placed in PCI communities.

Our most significant coordination is done so on a day-to-day basis with Mercy Corps' Community Action Investment Program. One example is the recent field officer exchange, during which all PCI Teams were matched with CAIP teams and spent two days in the field to share experiences. Shared trainings are ongoing, and coordination is both ongoing and natural.



## **Other Initiatives and Events**

### *Isfara Meeting*

At the request of USAID in January, PCI held a roundtable meeting in Isfara, Tajikistan to assess the need for more development assistance in Isfara raion and neighboring Kyrgyzstan communities. Representatives from USAID, SDC, ACTED, OSCE, Ittifok, UNRRDP, ICA:EHIO, Mercy Corps, National Association of Business Women, Shelter for Life, six local NGOs, and representatives from 12 Jamoats were in attendance. The general consensus in the meeting is that there is a need for more development programs in the area. The problems highlighted during the meeting were:

- Unemployment in the once industrialized region, which is exacerbated by the trade barriers with Uzbekistan. In addition, Tajikistan tax policies are prohibitive for small and medium enterprises to operate.
- Rising ground water levels resulting from mismanagement of water resources and poor drainage and the related problems of salinization, water-logging and the deterioration of infrastructure.
- Mined borders and resulting fatalities. (3 fatalities were reported on 3 January 2003).
- Poor communication sources in the region, including the poor state of news and information services such as radio, television and newspaper outlets.
- The disputed location of borders was also discussed and how this has led to serious tensions in communities in these areas.
- The 3 individuals currently held in Guantanamo Bay indicates rising fundamentalism.

An expansion proposal was submitted to USAID in November 2002. Part of the proposed PCI expansion will include working in 6 communities in Isfara and neighboring communities in Kyrgyzstan.

## **Political Issues**

There were several political and economic developments that had minor impacts on our project during the period, though none were more significant than the higher import taxes in Uzbekistan and the war in Iraq.

*50% - 90% Import Tax.* The Uzbekistan Government raised import taxes at varying rates between 50% and 90%. This resulted in the tightening of borders in the Ferghana Valley, which made it more difficult for our teams to cross borders. Though it has become more difficult to cross the borders, our field officers continue to get across. The obvious reason for the tightening of the borders was to reduce illegal trade, but the official reason was a quarantine for infectious diseases from Kyrgyzstan.

*War in Iraq.* According to an Associate Press Report in early March, members of Hizb-ut-Tahrir in Kyrgyzstan called for a holy war against Americans in Kyrgyzstan, which hosts U.S. troops. Despite this, since the outbreak of the war, there have been no visible differences in our relationships within PCI communities and operations remain unchanged. Although things remain stable, PCI Teams report that some community

members say there is a chance that the war may result in the possible rise in the number of youth joining fundamentalist groups.

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Peaceful Community Initiative is a Partnership of six NGOs. Below is the contact information and headquarters address of each partner organizations.

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## **Appendix A: PCI Community Profiles**

### **1. SOGMENT, Batken Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan**

**Sogment is 45 km southeast of Batken, the regional center, on Sohk's southwestern border.**

Situated high on the slopes of the Kishtut mountains in Kyrgyzstan, the village of Sogment sits above the rest of its neighbors. Though Sogment has a natural spring that provides more than enough water for itself, the neighboring downstream communities of Hushyar (Uzbekistan) and Charbak (Kyrgyzstan) are both dependent on the same source. Though the spring is capable of providing all three villages with clean drinking water during the winter, during the growing season, there is not enough water to satisfy all of the irrigation needs. When Sogment uses the majority of the spring water to irrigate its own home plots, this creates major tension with the downstream users who are virtually cut off. Further complicating Sogment's relationship with its neighbors is that the only road access to Sogment runs through Hushyar, Uzbekistan.

#### ***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 1,582
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:**  
Sogment is the upstream water user of a natural spring that supplies water to neighboring communities in Uzbekistan. During the growing season, there is not enough irrigation water for downstream users, which creates major tension.

### **2. HUSHYAR, Sokh Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan**

**Hushyar is 120 km southwest of Ferghana City, the oblast center.**

To Hushyar, and its fields of potatoes and wheat and orchards of apples of apricots, water is its most precious and scarce resource. With over 1,400 hectares of land, Hushyar's downstream dependence on water from Sogment, a village in Kyrgyzstan, is critical. Though the natural spring water from Sogment is plentiful during the winter, during the growing season, both drinking and irrigation water is in short supply. Due to this issue, this ethnic Tajik community in Uzbekistan depends more on its relationship with its neighbors in Kyrgyzstan than with any other. Furthermore, in addition to being a downstream user from Sogment, Hushyar is an upstream user from Charbak (Kyrgyzstan), who blame Hushyar for their own water shortages, creating a separate but related set of border tensions.

#### ***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 5,500
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Tajik
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** 1) In addition to being negatively effected by a lack of water and dependence on the upstream users in Sogment, Hushyar is blamed for this same shortage by users further downstream in Charbak, Kyrgyzstan. 2) Isolation from the main territory of Uzbekistan

As in all of Uzbekistan, most of Hushyar's farmland is state-owned, and leased to residents on a contract basis. Not all of the residents have an opportunity to use the land, as lease terms are often not acceptable for poorer residents, in contrast to the privatized land plots in the neighboring communities of Kyrgyzstan.

In Hushyar, as in other communities in Sokh Raion of Uzbekistan, there is a continued feeling of isolation and abandonment by the Government of Uzbekistan, as residents widely believe that they receive little attention based on their being ethnically Tajik.

### 3. CHARBAK, Batken Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan

Charbak is 45 km southeast of Batken, the regional center.

The small community of Charbak depends on its neighbors in Uzbekistan for much, including water, which in Uzbekistan is also in short supply. Charbak is the second downstream user of a natural spring that surfaces in Sogment (KYZ) then flows through Hushyar (UZ) on its way to this small community of only 356 Kyrgyz residents. Though in winter this lifeline provides a source of clean drinking water, during the growing season, all of this spring water is used to irrigate the fields of upstream users, leaving Charbak without drinking or irrigation water. This lack of water limits the crop selection of this traditionally agricultural community, which now mainly produces corn. In addition to a lack of water, the rugged surrounding terrain makes land a limited resource.

This small community has no secondary school of its own, and students in the 4<sup>th</sup> class and higher walk three kilometers to Sogment to study with Kyrgyz language instruction. There have been clashes between school children from Charbak and Hushyar.

Like nearby Sogment, the only road to and from Charbak goes through Uzbekistan. Additionally, the lack of telephone service in Charbak further isolates this small community.

#### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 356
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** This small community with limited land and human resources is a downstream water user from both Sogment and Khushyar, who deplete almost all of the natural spring water before it gets to Charbak. This natural spring is the only source for all three communities.

### 4. SHARKABAD, Sokh Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan

Sharkabad is 120 km southwest of Feghana City, the regional center.

Situated directly on the border with Kyrgyzstan, behind a defacto border set up by Kyrgyzstan authorities, and currently farming a small area of disputed land, Sharkabad is very much familiar with border tensions. The Kyrgyzstan authorities increased tensions by building a border post further up the road to the center of Sokh on a disputed swatch of land, meaning that all Sharkabad residents are required to go through the post, even if they never leave the sovereign territory of Uzbekistan. The situation became very tense when a Sharkabad resident was shot by Kyrgyzstan border guards for failing to stop his car last year. Although he was not seriously injured, this further angered residents about the presence of a Kyrgyzstan border post within Uzbekistan.

#### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 2,190
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Tajik
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Disputed land and the encroachment of Kyrgyzstan border posts have strained realtions, and the shooting at this post of a Sharkabad resident has heightened tensions. The most tangible source of tension is the lack of irrigation water and the difficulty of carrying drinking water 1.5 km up from the river.

This primarily agriculture community uses water from three sources: the River Sokh, and two irrigation canals designed to provide water to the residents of Boz-Adyr and Kara-Takoi, both in Kyrgyzstan. Although there is usually enough water for all communities, this is a source of tension for the communities in Kyrgyzstan.

Aside from border and water issues, the village population itself is already split between two physical locations. In the 1970s, Soviet engineers designed a plan to dam the River Sokh, to better control the flow of water to residents in Sokh and downstream users. In order to make that happen, local authorities ordered that residents of Sharkabad relocate outside of the flood zone, and constructed New Sharkabad, where residents would move to. Since the Soviet Union was dissolved before the dam was built, only half of the residents relocated, namely younger families. Now, the population is split between the original and the new Sharkabads. As residents try and address many challenges that face both, the reality of a two-community village becomes more of an apparent burden.

#### 5. BOZ-ADYR, Batken Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan Boz-Adyr is 30 km southeast of Batken, the regional center.

Boz-Adyr is a relatively new village, established in the 1970s by residents of Kara-Tokoy (Kyrgyzstan), whose limited land resources were taken away by the construction of the then-planned Sokh Reservoir. Previously land that had belonged to the state farm, the land in Boz-Adyr continued to be used for agriculture. In recent years, land privatization in Kyrgyzstan has divided this land into smaller, privately owned plots.

The main source of tension in Boz-Adyr is that the source of irrigation water for residents' fields is the River Sokh. Since this river is in Uzbekistan, at a much lower elevation than Boz-Adyr, water is provided via two irrigation canals and pump stations. Aside from the high costs of lift irrigation, the problem is that these irrigation canals run through Sharkabad (Uzbekistan). Residents of Boz-Adyr tend to blame water shortages on upstream users, such as their neighbors in Sharkabad, who also pump water to their community via this canal.

Another issue is the tension caused by the Kyrgyzstan border post on disputed land between Sharkabad and the center of Sokh, which provokes residents in Sharkabad. The strained relationship between these communities and the few opportunities for residents to interact is a major source of tension between neighboring communities.

##### ***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 1,890
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Irrigation water for Boz-Adyr is pumped up from an irrigation canal, which runs through Sharkabad, Uzbekistan. Growing season water shortages are often blamed on neighboring upstream residents, who cannot directly access the River Sokh themselves for irrigation water, and instead use the Boz-Adyr canal.

#### 6. KARA-TOKOY, Batken Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan Kara-Tokoy is 30 km southeast of Batken, the regional center.

Like Old Sharkabad, Kara-Tokoy also fell in the flood plain for the planned Sokh Reservoir, a project designed during the 1970s, but never constructed. Since the project was never built, many residents refused to relocate to Boz-Adyr, despite that regional authorities ceased providing support or services to Kara-Tokoy. This itself is an obvious source of tension, and many of the

##### ***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 822
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Irrigation water for Kara-Tokoy is pumped up from an irrigation canal, which runs through Sharkabad, Uzbekistan. Additionally, land shortages and a lack of municipal services cause major tensions for residents.

infrastructure in Kara-Tokoy is in dire need of repair or reconstruction.

Due to recent land privatization, residents now own small plots of land for farming, but limited land resources restrict opportunities for many residents. Additionally, irrigation water for Kara-Tokoy comes from the River Sokh, which is located in Uzbekistan. Irrigation canals and pump stations provide residents with water, though these canals flow through Sharkabad (Uzbekistan) which causes tension between users on both ends.

**7. INTERNATIONAL, Leilek Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan**  
**International is 185 km southwest of Batken, the regional center.**

International is a medium-sized village on the Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan border, that like the other communities in the area, faces serious problems with water. Though there is a limited supply of irrigation water available for the traditionally agricultural area, the water is not suitable for drinking. A broken-down drinking water system forces residents to drink the poor quality field water. Additionally, residents dump household refuse and human waste into the canal which carries the water between this and other communities on both sides of the border. This further increases the health risk, and creates a potential malaria breakout. The lack of suitable drinking water certainly increases the tension in International.

**QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 3,326
- \* **Ethnicity:** 71% Kyrgyz, 28% Uzbek, 1% Other
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Increased customs and border restrictions limit residents from doing commerce in the larger towns in nearby Tajikistan. Additionally, there is no clean drinking water in International, and residents drink irrigation water.

Although residents in the large community of International can legally cross into the neighboring communities in Tajikistan, the arbitrary enforcement of border customs and a visa regime used by border officials has restricted the amount of commerce that these residents can partake in. Although International is traditionally an agricultural community, this has further increased tension among residents.

**8. KULUNDU, Leilek Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan**  
**Kulundu is 18 km southwest of Batken, the regional center.**

Similar to its smaller neighbor International, Kulundu faces a variety of problems, none more serious than the lack of a working drinking water system, and the health problems caused by residents drinking unclean irrigation water. The canal that carries water to the center of town is also contaminated with debris, household garbage and human waste. This health problem is a serious concern, and the fact that users on both sides of the border both share and pollute the canal means that all most collaborate to improve their situation.

**QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 7938
- \* **Ethnicity:** 99% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The lack of drinking water and a clogged irrigation canals make water a major source of tension.

In addition to the drinking water concerns, this agricultural community is unable to irrigate its fields due to sediment and the growth of vegetation filling its irrigation canals.

The village is in serious need of cleaning the canals, but does not have the resources to do so.

Another problem that causes tension for residents is that Kulundu does not have adequate education facilities for its youth. There are not enough kindergartens or schools in the village, and many children do not attend the overcrowded classes.

#### 9. OVCHI, Bobojon-Gafurov Raion, Sogd Oblast, Tajikistan

Ovchi is 28 km south of Gafurov City, the regional center.

As a mainly Uzbek community in Tajikistan, many of the problems felt by residents in Ovchi, though similar to their neighbors, are attributed to their nationality more than anything else. Without the opportunity to communicate with many of their neighbors, tensions stemming from issues such as no drinking water system, unemployment, and a lack of gas are running high.

##### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 3,891
- \* **Ethnicity:** 78% Uzbek; 21% Tajik; 1% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** This Uzbek community feels that their lack of drinking water and gas is namely due to their ethnicity.

As most residents of Ovchi do seasonal work on the collective farm and do not have private land, irrigation water is less of an issue here than in villages on the Kyrgyzstan side. Regardless, for those who do own private land, or for those who receive their compensation from the collective farm in the form of produce, the lack of market access to sell produce is a source of tension. Since most of the closer markets are in Kyrgyzstan, border problems further compound this issue.

Additionally, overcrowded schools and the lack of educational materials in Uzbek is a serious issue of frustration.

#### 10. KALACHA, Bobojon-Gafurov Raion, Sogd Oblast, Tajikistan

Kalacha is 23 km south of Gafurov City, the regional center.

The main source of tension in Kalacha is centered around the large area of disputed land between Kalacha and Mahat, a small community across the border in Kyrgyzstan. Residents of Kalacha do not have gas in their homes, and in this densely populated village, struggle to find cooking fuel. In the past, Tajik residents of Kalacha collected firewood from the large disputed fields between the two Republics. In order to secure the land for Kyrgyzstan, government officials established a border post on this demarkated area and have encouraged Kyrgyz residents of Mahat to relocate there. Now Tajik residents who cross to collect wood are either forced to pay border guards for the wood they gather or have that wood confiscated at the border. This is the source of major tension between residents who live near the border itself.

##### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 6057
- \* **Ethnicity:** 97% Tajik, 4% Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Russian
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** A lack of cooking fuel and harassment when collecting wood on the other side of the border, as well as a contaminated shared water source.



Additionally, like many communities in the Ferghana Valley, one of the largest issue facing Kalacha is water. An operational pump station provides water to a canal that serves as both a border between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, as well as a lifeline for communities on both sides. Though Kalacha is one of the main upstream users of this system, the general lack of water is a source of frustration for all users. Though all are effected equally by this, the canal is the only source of drinking water available, and is heavily polluted by residents upstream. Downstream users view this aspect as a source of tension.

In addition to the above mentioned problems, residents struggle with unemployment, the lack of access to medical facilities, no communication infrastructure and the complete lack of gas.

**11. KAYRAGACH, Batken Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan**  
**Boz-Adyr is 30 km southeast of Batken, the regional center.**

This predominantly Uzbek community struggles to maintain their agrarian lifestyle with a debilitating lack of irrigation water. As the last downstream user of an antiquated and only partially operational irrigation system, the residents of Kayragach often find themselves with too little water to irrigate their fields. As they struggle with decisions about how to utilize what they get among themselves for both irrigation and drinking water, they blame most of their plight on the upstream Kyrgyz users in Laiyla. There have even been physical confrontation between residents of different villages disputing the water rights of each other. Furthermore, the two pumps that once provided water from this system to users in the more elevated section of the community, are no longer operational, and hence, those residents do not have access to the limited water that flows to Kayragach.

***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 2,022
- \* **Ethnicity:** 98% Uzbek, 2% Other
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The lack of irrigation water and the tension this causes between an upstream Kyrgyz community is very serious. Additionally, a crumbling bridge makes transporting produce to market a difficult venture.

Another problem that residents face is transporting their agricultural outputs to market. Though there is a bridge that crosses the Kodjobatkergansai river towards town, the bridge has been worn down and is now no longer suitable for large vehicles. This means that trucks transporting produce to market must bypass the river by travelling through Ovchi-Kalacha, Tajikistan. In order to do so, drivers are often asked to pay bribes or exhorbinant fees. This is another major problem for residents struggling to earn a living.

**12. PAHTAABAD, Bobojon-Gafurov Raion, Sogd Oblast, Tajikistan**  
**Pahtaabad is 23 km south of Gafurov City, the regional center.**

The small mainly ethnic Kyrgyz community of Pahtaabad is isolated in more than one way. In addition to having an ethnic minority population in Tajikistan, there is no transportation

***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 817
- \* **Ethnicity:** 97% Kyrgyz; 2% Uzbek, 1% Tajik
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The lack of transport to the closest urban center (Ovchi) and the relative isolation felt by residents.

along the eight kilometer road between Pahtaabad and the nearest urban center, Ovchi. Furthermore, the lack of telephone service means that reaching the outside world can often be extremely difficult for residents of this agricultural community..

Most residents who work do so at the nearby collective farm, where they receive their wages in the form of produce. For those who do not have jobs at the collective farm, there are few other options. Unemployment is a major issue.

Although the town is predominantly Kyrgyz, there are no educational materials in Kyrgyz for the schoolchildren. Though they are readily available across the field in Kyrgyzstan, the Government of Tajikistan does not have the resources or the capacity to provide them themselves. As this leads many residents from Pahtaabad to cross the canal and attend school in Kyrgyzstan, these children become increasingly less connected to the nation in which they leave.

Like neighboring communities, water is the most serious problem. There is only weekly access to water, which is stored in a large open pit. This small reservoir holds water which is used for both drinking and irrigation.

### 13. RAVOT, Kanibadam Raion, Sogd Oblast, Tajikistan

Ravot is 92 km southwest of Khujand, the regional center.

Though this mainly Uzbek community faces a myriad of problems, the perception that this issues have befallen upon them due to their ethnicity is the most dangerous one. Additionally, their close proximity to Uzbekistan and their ability to see similar Uzbek communities on the other side of the border receive the attention and support of local authorities address further increases tensions in Ravot. The lack of gas, water, telephone and bus services are great sources of frustration. The nearest hospital is 12 kilometers away. Additionally, the Tajikistan government rarely pays the pension which is often less than \$1 US dollar per month.

#### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 1870
- \* **Ethnicity:** 98% Uzbek, 2% Tajik, Kyrgyz, Tatar and Russian
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The minefield next to Ravot has caused fatalities in recent years. Also, the overall lack of attention is attributed to the population being predominantly Uzbek.

One life threatening problem facing Ravot is a minefield that is situated between Ravot and Uzbekistan. There have been fatal accidents involving Ravot residents who have been killed while trying to cross into Uzbekistan to visit family. Visa restrictions prevent most if not all from travelling back and forth via the main roads, and force many to try to cross through mined areas.

### 14. BAKHMAL, Besharyk Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan

Bakhmal is 25 km southwest of Besharyk, the regional center.

Unlike most communities where PCI works, the population of Bakhmal is made up of two large ethnic groups. The large

#### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 2259
- \* **Ethnicity:** 60% Uzbek, 40% Tajik
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The mix of ethnicities in the village and the presence of landmines in the fields through which Tajiks illegally cross into Tajikistan.

population of Tajiks who live in this community in Uzbekistan feel very much cut off from family and friends in Tajikistan and second-class citizens in Uzbekistan. The fact that their immediate neighbors are ethnic Uzbek increases the tension within their own community. Though the village has grown in two distinct areas for the past 15 years, both still rely on services in both sections. For example there is one school for both areas, located in the older part of the village, with only a kindergarten in the newer section. Both are in need of serious repair and face overcrowding.

The most serious problem in Bakhmal is a life-threatening one. Many residents of Bakhmal are also effected by the minefields that separate Uzbekistan from Tajikistan, as many Tajiks attempt to cross the border illegally by walking across the fields instead of via border posts.

Additionally, Bakhmal has very poor communication with the outside world, as there is no telephone service.

#### 15. PAHTABUSTON, Uzbekistan Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan

**Pahtabuston is 15 km southeast from Yaipan, the Raion center.**

Most of the tension in the small agricultural community of Pahtabuston is related more to what neighbors have, as opposed to what Pahtabuston does not have. Located just north of the hills that separate Uzbekistan from Tajikistan, this predominantly Kyrgyz community has seen little of the development which its surrounding neighbors have. Most residents believe that the Uzbekistan authorities have intentionally left the ethnic minority here. In Pahtabuston, there is no gas, a crumbling overcrowded school, and little social infrastructure. Neighboring communities on both sides have natural gas, and residents of Pahtabuston believe that neighbors are more likely to see municipal construction projects before they will in Pahtabuston.

##### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 1960
- \* **Ethnicity:** 99% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** This Kyrgyz community have little in contrast with their neighbors, including no natural gas and a crumbling school.

Most residents in Pahtabuston farm home plots, and the apricot and apple orchards are highly productive. These farmers do have access to markets, and most make their living working the fields.

#### 16. VORUKH, Besharyk Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan

**Vorukh is 35km west of Kokand**

Vorukh was chosen as a PCI community based on the perception by the Tajik majority or residents that the issues they face are due to their ethnicity. Among the issues that face Vorukh is the lack of a clean source of drinking water. The pump station that has operated since the Soviet era has now seen the third and final pump break down. The lack of fresh water and poor storage conditions in earthen pits have led to outbreaks of

typhoid in recent years. Though water is a problem for many residents, these residents have little hope of receiving assistance from the authorities because they are Tajiks.

In addition to drinking water, irrigation water is also in short supply. Further complicating this is an area of 115 hectares of disputed land that is used by Uzbek farmers from Tajikistan. Farmers from Vorukh claim that these farmers use more than their share for a common source of irrigation water.

There is a clean water source on the other side of the border in Tajikistan, but the area between the two borders was mined, to prevent armed incursions from groups such as the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan a few years ago. As most if not all residents do not have the means to get visas, and since the Ravot customs post is often closed, many take the chance of walking through mined areas to illegally cross into Tajikistan to reach family members and friends.

**QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 1235
- \* **Ethnicity:** 75% Tajik, 25% Uzbek
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The lack of drinking water and minefields along the closed border cause much tension among the ethnic Tajik residents.

**17. JIGDALIK, Kanibadam Raion, Sogd Oblast, Tajikistan**

Jigdalik is located 15 km south of Kanibadam

Jigdalik population is 100% ethnic Kyrgyz who have a sense of isolation and neglect are living in extreme poverty. Jigdalik is one of PCI's poorest communities. This poverty and isolation has angered citizens, and they feel more of affiliation with Kyrgyzstan than with Tajikistan. In the neighboring ethnic Tajik communities the standard of living is higher, and the infrastructure (natural gas systems, schools, medical points) is in better condition. There is a scarcity of water for the limited agricultural land, and many complain about the difficulty of crossing the border into Kyrgyzstan. Many of the citizens do not have enough funds to purchase passports, which has caused difficulties with traveling. Families from the original Jigdalik, where located on the Syr Darya and were moved to the community's current located after the construction of the Kairakum Canal 35 years ago.

**QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 1800
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Isolation and neglect by Tajikistan local authorities. Extreme poverty.

**18. JANGI RAVOT, Kanibadam Raion, Sogd Oblast, Tajikistan**

Ravot is 92 km southwest of Khujand, the regional center.

As with Ravot, Jangi Ravot community faces numerous problems, but the main source of tension is that they feel neglected by local authority because the community is ethnic Uzbek. Another major cause for tension in the community is the mines on the border that resulted in a number of fatalities from citizens trying to illegally cross the border to access markets in Uzbekistan. The border posts between Uzbekistan and Tajikistan are the tightest in the Ferghana Valley. The community also has an array of other problems including no natural gas and clean drinking water, scarcity of irrigation

**QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 2000
- \* **Ethnicity:** 99% Uzbek, 1% Tajik, Kyrgyz, Tatar and Russian
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The minefield next to Jangi Ravot has caused fatalities in recent years. Also, the overall lack of attention is attributed to the population being predominantly Uzbek.

water, and medical point and school are in disrepair. Citizens have the perception that life is much better for the citizens of Uzbekistan.

**19. KORAYANTAK, Ferghana Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan**  
**Korayantak is 46 km from Ferghana, the regional center.**

For the many Kyrgyz who inhabit Korayantak, being citizens of Uzbekistan is both a blessing and a curse. It is a blessing because unlike in the nearby rugged edge of Kyrgyzstan, there are paved roads. It is a curse because of the communities location, as it very difficult to cross the border to Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan to visit family of friends, and access to markets and health facilities. Several citizens died last year on their way to the hospital because they were unable to cross the border because they did not have the correct documents. A tightly controlled border makes coming and going nearly impossible even for those who hold Uzbekistan passports. This is a major source of frustration and tension. Additionally, there are a fair share of problems in Uzbekistan, including a short supply of irrigation water, a lack of drinking water, no natural gas and no public bathhouses.

**QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 1,302
- \* **Ethnicity:** 99% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The inability to cross into Kyrgyzstan, and the lack of attention from Uzbekistan authorities.

Another source of frustration is the lack of Kyrgyz language educational materials. Since these materials are not available in Uzbekistan, and since residents cannot cross the border, schools are inadequately supplied. Additionally, the school itself is in need of major repair.

Though the expanses of undeveloped land leading up to Kyrgyzstan make the area ideal for grazing sheep, cattle and goats, aside from livestock and agriculture, there are few options for employment.

**20. KYRGYZ-KYSHTAK, Kadamjay Raion, Batken Oblast, Kyrgyzstan**  
**Kyrgyz-Kyshtak is 70 km northeast of Batken, the regional center.**

For residents of Kyrgyz-Kyshtak, their geographical proximity to the many urban areas and services of Uzbekistan offers them nothing but reminders of what could be. The reality is that due to a strict visa regimen and closed border posts, residents are forced to navigate the 40 kilometer dirt road to the main road to Osh to access the city's services in no less than three hours. Although this small community has some services available, including a small medical clinic, serious medical attention is unavailable.

**QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 3209
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The anger from a fatal confrontation between Kyrgyz residents and Uzbekistan authorities has yet to subside.

Tensions are high between Kyrgyz residents after clashes with Uzbekistan authorities in 2001. Though local Kyrgyz residents often walk through 15 hectares of disputed land on the path to a neighboring village in Kyrgyzstan, two years ago young soldiers from Uzbekistan accosted a citizen and demanded to see his passport. An argument ensued, and when the Uzbek soldier and Kyrgyz resident began to physically confront each other, the soldier shot and killed the resident. Many citizens took to the streets, and an angry mob from Kyrgyz-Kyshtak even later attacked an unarmed border guard after they stopped his car. Outside intervention calmed the situation, but tension has been high ever since.

This village of 530 hectares is mainly an agricultural one, though the shortage of irrigation water and the salinisation of the land are major problems that have yet to be addressed.

## 21. BORBALIK, Olti-Aryk Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan

**Borbalik is 14 km from Olti-Aryk, the raion center.**

Borbalik is located directly off the Ferghana-Kokand highway near Rishtam, and neighbors two other PCI communities, Kyrgyz-Kyshtak and Katput. Though there are a handful of problems here related to their immediate neighbors, the larger issue within Borbalik is that the mainly Tajik residents perceive the inattention they receive from local authorities as the result of their ethnicity.

Additionally, the relationship between residents from Borbalik and Kyrgyz-Kyshtak is very strained. Issues such as dispute farmland, shared natural gas resources, and limited irrigation water have spilled over on numerous occasions. In addition to the shooting in Kyrgyz-Kyshtak (see above), there was another high profile event in which Borbalik youth were caught in Kyrgyz-Kyshtak stealing green wheat. When apprehended by young Kyrgyz residents, one of the offenders was stabbed. Although he was not seriously injured, this raised tensions significantly.

In Borbalik, a large percentage of the farmland belongs to the collective farm, and those who do farm individual plots struggle to do so with the lack of irrigation water. With compensation from the kolhoz, an average amount of 250-300 thousand Uzbek Sums (\$160-\$190) and a 300-500 kilogram bag of wheat annually, there are few options for supporting a family.

### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 7133
- \* **Ethnicity:** 96% Tajik, 4% Uzbek, Kyrgyz, and Russian
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Separate incidents, including a stabbing and a shooting have strained relations with neighboring Kyrgyz-Kyshtak and Borbalik.

## 22. KATPUT Olti-Aryk Raion, Ferghana Oblast, Uzbekistan

**Katput is 16 km southwest of Olti-Aryk, the raion center.**

As local disputes of shared resources and disputed land have been escalated on ethnic lines, the relationship has become strained between a cluster containing the three communities of Kyrgyz-Kyshtak (Kyrgyz), Borbalik (Tajik) and Katput (Uzbek). Despite that residents of Katput are ethnic Uzbek, they equally suffer from poor state services and a worsening of relations between neighbors.

One serious issue facing the residents of Katput is the salinization of irrigation water and subsequent raising of the water table. Since most residents are farmers, the inability to drain saturated fields causes salinization problems and deterioration of foundations of many buildings in Katput. For

### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 4,775
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Uzbek
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Limited natural resources, including land and water, further strain relations between Katput, the Tajik community of Borbalik, and the Kyrgyz village of Kyrgyz-Kyshtak.

those who do not farm the limited land in Katput, a significant amount raise livestock that graze on what land they have in Katput, as well as on the land of Kyrgyz-Kyshtak. This has led to confrontations with private land owners in Kyrgyzstan, as well as other herders. These problems, though fundamentally tied to natural resources, are further aggravated by the ethnic tensions and strained relations of these neighbors.

### 23. KAYTPAS, Kadamjayski Raion, Batkent Oblast, Kyrgyzstan

Katypas is 65 km northeast of Batken, the regional center.

Situated west of Kyrgyz-Kyshtak on the Uzbekistan border near the Rishton border post. Katypas is an agricultural community with the main crops corn, wheat, rice, and livestock. The village has an array of problems including absence of clean drinking water, rising ground water levels, extremely poor roads, and public facilities are in disrepair. The rising groundwater has caused tensions with neighboring Uzbekistan communities, who claim that rice production is the cause of the rising levels. The rising groundwater has caused damage to infrastructure, salinization, and waterlogging. In addition, the problems of crossing the border to Uzbekistan to gain access to the market in Rishton and to visit relatives has become more difficult since the Uzbekistan Government placed a quarantine late last year (2002). Because the roads are in such poor condition, many commercial bus route drivers refuse to have this on their route, contributing to the village's isolation. In the last six months, there has been a rise in cattle thieves between the citizens Katypas and Katput.

#### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 1,600
- \* **Ethnicity:** 100% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Rising groundwater levels causing deterioration to infrastructure, salinization, and waterlogging. Cattle thieves causing problems with neighboring Uzbekistan communities, and isolation from tightening of border posts.

### 24. JAR KYSHTAK, Aravan Raion, Osh Oblast, Kyrgyzstan

Jar Kyshtak is 20 km west of Osh.

When the land in this small mainly Uzbek community was privatized by the Government of Kyrgyzstan, much smaller portions were distributed to residents than in other areas. If in other areas of Kyrgyzstan the parcels averaged 0.2 or 0.3 hectares per family, in Jar Kyshtak, the land parcels averaged only .1 hectare per family. Since most residents make their living off the land, the socio-economic situation is extremely low.

Additionally, until 1998, the majority of residents went to school and worked in the neighboring communities near Marhamat, Uzbekistan. After border restrictions were imposed about five years ago, and foreign residents were banned from attending school in Uzbekistan, residents have been forced to find other means. This has been very problematic for residents, as there is no school in Jar Kyshtak. Children now walk four kilometers to attend school in a neighboring village, on a dirt pathway which often turns muddy and icy in winter. The walk usually takes children one and a half hour each way.

#### **QUICK FACTS:**

- \* **Population:** 1800
- \* **Ethnicity:** 90% Uzbek, 10% Kyrgyz
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The process of privatization left residents with unusually small plots of land, and border restrictions have made studying very difficult for local youth.

Water is also a major problem for residents, as there is no access to clean drinking water in the community, and irrigation water management is in a state of chaos.



**25. BURIBASHI, Marhamat Raion, Andijan Oblast, Uzbekistan**  
**Buribashi is 10 kilometers east of Marhamat.**

Buribashi represents a different type of problem than what most PCI communities face. In Buribashi, the mainly Kyrgyz population is beginning to lose its cultural identity. The tightened borders and bleak prospects for opportunities in Kyrgyzstan have contributed to the process through which youth do not value their Kyrgyz identity. More and more youth are unable to speak Kyrgyz, as they instead learn Uzbek and look towards opportunities in their county of residence. This is a source of tension between generations, and the lack of communication with other Kyrgyz communities in Kyrgyzstan is an issue that should be addressed.

***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 1802
- \* **Ethnicity:** 70% Kyrgyz, 30% Uzbek
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** A cultural disconnect with Kyrgyzstan is leading many youth to cut ties with their cultural identity, a source of tension between different generations of Buribashi residents.

In addition to this unique social problem, residents of Buribashi are also faced with many social infrastructure challenges. Water is a major problem, as there is no source of either drinking or irrigation water. There is no natural gas supply, which is unusual for Uzbekistan. Additionally, the schools are in dire need of repair.

**26. JEKE-MISTE, Ararvan Raion, Osh Oblast, Kyrgyzstan**  
**Jeke-Miste is located 5 km west of Marhamat.**

Jeke-Miste is an unfortunate example of how borders and existing infrastructure can often be frustratingly contradictory in the Ferghana Valley. Though this community is in close proximity and accessible to the populated area near Marhamat, Uzbekistan, it is isolated behind the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan border and amongst the rising hills of Kyrgyzstan. Though there are two roads that connect Jeke-Miste to rayon and oblast centers, the main and most direct road cuts through Uzbekistan on its way to Osh, Kyrgyzstan. The only other road is a 100 kilometer detour through Kyrgyzstan. Though residents are legally allowed to cross through Uzbekistan, this requires an 8-step entry checkpoint crossing and a separate 8-point exit checkpoint crossing. This time consuming process must be repeated when returning from Kyrgyzstan as well, and is a great source of frustration and tension for residents of Jeke-Miste.

***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 2,313
- \* **Ethnicity:**
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** Residents of this isolated community must pass through Uzbekistan on their way to their own rayon and regional centers. In Uzbekistan, they face bureaucratic harassment, which is a source of tension among residents.

In addition, residents of Jeke-Miste face many fundamental challenges, such as a lack of drinking water, the absence of natural gas for heating or cooking, problems with irrigation water, poor road condition and a decaying school that no longer meets code.

**27. NAIMAN, Marhamat Raion, Andijan Oblast, Uzbekistan**  
**Naiman is 5 km west of Marhamat.**

The small community of Naiman saddles the Uzbekistan-Kyrgyzstan border, and was terribly effected by the border demarcations of these two governments in 1998. This community was literally split in two by a tightened border, and families and friends suddenly found themselves cut off from each other and unable to cross. If this was not difficult

***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 1,050
- \* **Ethnicity:**
- \* **Major Source of Tension:** The border literally split this community into halves, and the government plans on destroying many homes which fall within 50 meters of the border.

enough, the situation was made worse when it was announced that all buildings within a 50-meters of the border would be destroyed. 94 homes fell within this distance, and though authorities have promised to tear them down, there has been no action on this yet. Regardless, with both countries constructing frontier border posts on both edges of Naiman, this community more than most is viewed by its residents as abandoned and forgotten. Residents blame all of their problems on Naiman's unfortunate location.

In addition to the incredibly difficult border situation, there are other challenges. Most residents work on a former collective farm, where they do not receive their salaries for months at a time. Furthermore, there is no clean source of drinking water available, no gas and no medical clinic available. The lack of a kindergarten forces women to take their children into the field with them when working or leave them unattended.

## 28. JANI-ABAD, Ararvan Raion, Osh Oblast, Kyrgyzstan

**Jani-Abad is 15 km north of Aravan**

Jani Abad is a cluster of three small communities (Uygarabad, Jany Abad, and International). Unlike many of the mono-ethnic communities within another country (ie ethnic Kyrgyz community within Uzbekistan) Jani-Abad is a multi-ethnic community largely comprised of ethnic Kyrgyz and Uzbeks. This border community main problem is access to Uzbekistan markets because of the tightening of the border crossings. The community's livelihood is dependent on agriculture, and land in the privatization had a low per capita distribution of .09ha. There is tension related to water distribution within the community and to downstream users in Uzbekistan. Other main problems include bad roads, drinking water, school is disrepair, and lack of good medical facilities.

### ***QUICK FACTS:***

- \* **Population:** 4,200
- \* **Ethnicity:** 36% Kyrgyz, 60% Uzbek, 4% Russian
- \* **Major Source of Tension:**  
Irrigation water distribution and scarcity within the community and across the border to Uzbekistan.  
Access to markets in Uzbekistan because the tightening of the borders.